DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 622 24 RC 003 881

TITLE	Bilingual Family School Project (Adair County, Oklahoma).
INSTITUTION	South Central Regional Education Lab. Corp., Little Rock, Ark.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO	BR-6-2100
PUB DATE	69
NOTE	8p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.50
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians, *Bilingual Schools, Economically Disadvantaged, *Educational Objectives, Instructional Programs, *Kindergarten, Language Handicaps, *Parent Participation, Program Costs, Rural Population
IDENTIFIERS	Cherokees

ABSTRACT

A survey of educational needs by the South Central Region Educational Laboratory assigned high priority to provision of bilingual preschool experiences for Cherokee Indian children and to home-school-community involvement of their parents. Established in March 1968, the Bilingual Family School in Adair County, Oklahoma, developed criterion objectives for language arts, music, art, social studies, science, health, math, and self-concept. The instructional program, consisting of four and one-half hours of the school day, emphasized language development and individual exploration of educational materials. Parent activities included daily exposure to the childrens' program in addition to studying the Cherokee language, developing teaching aids, learning handcrafts, and receiving information on sanitation and nutrition. (JH)

BR 6-2100
PA-24
OE/BR ~~DEL~~
FILE
Copy

RC

ED034622

BILINGUAL FAMILY SCHOOL PROJECT

(Adair County, Oklahoma)

RECEIVED
DEC 12 1969

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

RC 003881

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED034622

BILINGUAL FAMILY SCHOOL PROJECT

(Adair County, Oklahoma)

South Central Region Educational Laboratory
Little Rock, Arkansas

1969

BILINGUAL FAMILY SCHOOL

Soon after SCREL was incorporated in 1966 the Region served by the Laboratory was surveyed and educational needs categorized. High priority was assigned to the evident needs of large numbers of non-reservation Cherokee Indian children. Officials of the Cherokee Tribe and local school administrators whose schools served Cherokee children both ranked provision of bilingual preschool experiences for Cherokee-speaking children and home-school-community involvement for their parents as critical needs for this population.

Northeastern Oklahoma has the largest number of non-reservation Indians in the United States. The Cherokees who survived the infamous "Trail of Tears," which stretched from western North Carolina to Oklahoma, were the forebears of the 12,000 contemporary families who now make their homes in Adair, Cherokee, Delaware, Mayes, and Sequoyah Counties.

These families comprise a hardcore, rural poverty group. Almost 75 percent of the males of this population earn less than $3,000 per year; more than 30 percent earn less than $1,000 yearly. Eighty-five percent of the area's Cherokee population is on welfare. Adair County, the site of the greatest Cherokee concentration, ranks fourth on the President's list of America's poorest counties.

When the Cherokee child enters school at age six, he finds himself an instant misfit. His language is no longer useful to him. His experiences within the Cherokee culture are neither valued in this new setting, nor serve as relevant foundations for future learnings.

By fourth grade, many Cherokee children are in serious trouble in school; by grade eight most are experiencing chronic failure. Fifty-eight percent of those who enter school fail to complete the eighth grade. Since Cherokee is the first

language of most homes, many children enter English-speaking classrooms having little previous experience with the new language. The language barrier has impaired both educational and economic development of the Region. Inability to communicate and lack of self-esteem have caused many Cherokees to withdraw from interaction with the Caucasian community.

Overall objectives which emerged included: 1) adequate preparation of bilingual children for first grade entrance, and 2) support of the parent's effort to help the child master traditional public school subject matter.

During the planning stages of the SCREL project, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began funding kindergartens in schools serving Cherokee children. Since these kindergartens were virtually without appropriate materials or methods, qualified staff or academic objectives, it became apparent that the proposed bilingual preschool could also serve as a model for other kindergartens in the geographic area.

Since distrust of the white man by western Cherokees was apparent, identification of a staff person from -- and trusted by -- the Cherokee community was a critical first need. A middle-aged, bilingual, Cherokee woman, already holding a leadership role in the community was selected. She was given the title, Home-School Coordinator, and moved immediately to make home visits to Cherokee families who were potential project participants. An initial group of four consenting Cherokee families formed the school population. As rapport with the community grew, more families came. Eventually twenty children were enrolled.

A small church facility was initially used as a site. During the summer school consolidation made available a permanent facility consisting of one large

classroom, a kitchen, two storage rooms, and two restrooms.

Staff for the Bilingual Family School was hired largely from within the Cherokee community. Eventually it grew to include a teaching program associate, a parent education teacher, a teacher aide, a cook, a bus driver, and a person skilled in Cherokee translation.

Criterion objectives for preschool children attending the Bilingual Family School were developed for language arts, music, art, social studies, science, health, math, and self-concept.

In general, these objectives included:

1. Literature

   -- Identification of plots and characters of fairy tales and rhymes
   -- Description of feelings of characters
   -- Dramatization of pantomime of familiar stories
   -- Creation of own stories

2. Language

   -- Vocabulary -- Cherokee and English
   -- Increased verbal expression
   -- Increased visual and auditory discrimination
   -- Improved work-study skills
   -- Improved eye-hand coordination

3. Music

   -- Singing and learning songs
   -- Expressing feelings to music
   -- Responding to rhythmic patterns of walking, running, skipping to music

4. Art

   -- Identification of colors
   -- Description of textures
   -- Matching of line drawings
   -- Choice of art media as a means of expression

5. Social Development and Knowledge of Self

-- Can give name and age
-- Can name persons in his home
-- Listens attentively
-- Demonstrates courteousness at snack time and at play
-- Dresses himself
-- Puts away toys and materials
-- Takes care of personal property
-- Performs school duties appropriate for him

6. Social Studies

-- Names rooms in house
-- Identifies furniture

7. Counting and Numeration

-- Can count to ten orally
-- Reads numerals to ten
-- Correctly uses terms such as "large; small; more than; less than; first; middle; and last"
-- Names circles, squares, triangle, and rectangle

8. Health

-- Learns simple health habits, such as handwashing
-- Can name some foods
-- Can name sense organs, and sensations of touch, and taste
-- Can recognize various sounds

9. Living Things

-- Recognizes and names pets, farm animals, trees, and plants
-- Knows seasons, can name pets, farm animals, wild animals, insects, trees, and some plants.

The daily program for children was designed to provide experiences to meet program objectives. The instructional program included four and one-half hours of the school day, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., divided as follows:

Familiar children's stories were presented by a bilingual aide to a small group of children for three class periods. On the first day the story was presented in both languages as a listening experience. On

the second day the same story was presented in both languages using teaching aides. The third day's treatment of the same story was devoted to development of sequence in both languages and dramatic interpretation. Verbal responses were illicited from children in both languages.

Children were allowed to explore daily those materials previously selected by teachers and aides. Children were free to handle books, beads, puzzles, blocks, pegboards, lacing cards, clay, crayons, pencils, paper, educational toys, and paints.

Concrete objects were used extensively for building vocabulary in both Cherokee and English. Children were consistently encouraged to speak in complete sentences. Each program activity was viewed by staff as part of the child's learning experience.

Discussion and exploration were encouraged in such activities as snack time and the noon meal.

Parents came to school on the bus with their children and participated in adult activities each day the bilingual school was in session. Objectives for parents include:

--Increased vocabulary in Cherokee and English

--Improved English sentence structure

--Ability to read and write Cherokee at an elementary level

-- Ability to read English at the eighth grade level of comprehension

--Knowledge of plot and ability to relate to children a dozen or more better known Cherokee legends and stories

--Basic knowledge concerning the importance of a balanced diet and use of commodity foods in its preparation

--Familiarity with kindergarten materials and their use

--Basic understanding of child development (emotional, mental, physical, and social) and the ability to relate such knowledge to their own children

--Increased understanding of how children learn and how such learnings may be stimulated and rewarded at home

Parent activities included a daily exposure to the program being presented to the children. Parents were encouraged to observe children in all activities and helped to understand how activities benefited youngsters.

In addition, parents studied the Cherokee language daily, as well as such crafts as basketry and beading which yielded both renewed interest in the Cherokee heritage and a saleable skill. Other activities -- conducted in both English and Cherokee -- provided information on sanitation, nutrition, sewing, and making of teaching aids.

Seventeen parents participated regularly in the Bilingual School program. Members of the group appear to show a significant increase in their interest in the school and support of its activities.

Cost. Cost for approximately twelve months of operation from March-June, 1968 and from September 1968 - June 1969 totalled $33,516.69. Of that amount salaries and wages consumed $24,467.95; transportation $3,142.05; and rent, utilities and renovation $5,180.88.